

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

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R 080210Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9442

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 0918

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR SN

SUBJECT: LEE KUAN YEW SPEECH TO NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

1. SUMMARY-IN PREPARED SPEECH TO NZ NATIONAL PRESS CLUB APRIL 7, SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW SAID NIXON DOCTRINE DIED AT WATERGATE. AS A RESULT US WILL NOT ENGAGE IN MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SEA AND CONTEST FOR INFLUENCE IS NOW BETWEEN PRC AND USSR. END SUMMARY.

2. OVERALL TONE OF LEE'S SHORT SPEECH WAS GLOOMY PESSIMISM. IN SUM, NIXON DOCTRINE WAS DEAD AND US WOULD NOT ENGAGE IN MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SEA IN FORE-SEEABLE FUTURE. THAIS RECOGNIZE THAT US FOCES IN THAILAND WILL NOT BE COMMITTED T HELP THEM. AS A RESULT THEY ARE UNCLASSIFIED

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MAKING A VIRTUE OUT OF POLITICAL NECESSITY BY REQUESTING

USG TO WITHDRAW. RTG AND OTHER SEA GOVERNMENTS UNWILLING TO GO TO WAR IN ORDER END UP IN SAME POSITION CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIETNAM FIND THEMSELVES TODAY. THEREFORE, THEY WILL SEEK POLITICAL ACCOMMODATION. KEY TO FUTURE LIES WITH THAILAND. REST OF SEA WILL HAVE TO ADJUST TO WHATEVER THAIS WORK OUT.

3. THAILAND, ACCORDING TO LEE, HAS SOME TIME TO WORK OUT ITS FUTURE. IMPLYING THAT HE FELT TOTAL NORTH VIETNAMESE VICTORY WAS ASSURED, HE SAID HANOI WOULD HAVE MANY YEARS OF REBUILDING VIETNAMESE ECONOMY BEFORE IT COULD TURN ITS ATTENTION TO THAILAND. NVN ATTITUDE TOWARD THAILAND WOULD BE HARSHER THAN THAT OF PRC. FOR ONE THING, CHINA HAD NOT BEEN HIT BY THAILAND-BASED B-52'S. AS A RESULT THAIS WILL FIND IT EASIER TO WORK OUT SOME SORT OF ACCOMMODATION WITH PRC BEFORE ATTEMPTING SAME WITH HANOI.

4. REAL FUTURE FOR SEA NOW LIES IN CONTEST FOR INFLUENCE BETWEEN USSR AND PRC. TRADITIONAL PRC HEGEMONY WILL BE A MAJOR FORCE BUT SOVIETS WILL BE ABLE TO PUT MORE MONEY, ARMS AND TECHNOLOGY INTO THE EQUATION. CONTINUED US NAVAL AND ECONOMIC PRESENCE IN THE AREA WILL MAKE ADJUSTMENT LESS ABRUPT FOR SOME COUNTRIES.

5. IN QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOLLOWING SPEECH LEE SAID NEW ZEALAND FORCES WERE WELCOME TO STAY IN SINGAPORE AS LONG AS THEY WISH TO DO SO. LEE INDICATED THAT GNZ TROOPS HAD SERVED AS VALUABLE STABILIZING FORCE BUT THAT THEIR PRESENT UTILITY WAS MARGINAL. EMBASSY WILL BE DISCUSSING TROOP ISSUE WITH GNZ OFFICIALS AND WILL REPORT THEIR REACTIONS VIA SEPTEL.

6. TRANSCRIPTS OF PREPARED SPEECH AND QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION BEING PREPARED. EMBASSY WILL FORWARD ASAP.
SELDEN

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